Miscellany.

FOR THE CENTINEL.

[The following Essay was wrote and published immediately after the great fire, March 20, 1760, and is now republished as applicable to the late Conflagration.]

THE uncertainty of human life, the transitory nature and continual vicissitudes of this present state of being and of all enjoyments and possessions in it, are truths so well known to every thoughtful person, and have so often been the subjects of judicious writers in all ages, that the strongest invention can perhaps scarce find any thing new to offer, and a modest Muse with reluctance undertakes the theme: Yet such is the frailty of human nature, that when a sudden Catastrophe surrounds us the mind is flattered and disconcerted, and does not readily collect those reflections suitable to the occasion, or else by having been used to neglect such reflections, from a conception that they must needs flow naturally from such calamities as should produce them, the mind through disuse, may not immediately conceive them when wanted. It is true, the voice of nature has always been the same, is continually sounding, and understood by all; yet strange to say, what we hear the oftenest, we attend to the least, and what we are the most certain of, we give the least heed to; but there are times when good providence sends a louder summons by the struggles of nature, and proclaims those truths, which though they could not operate by the importance of their nature, yet may force their effect by rouzing the passions; but here frailty again takes place, from extreme thoughtlessness, the passions being rouzed, we rush on to confusion and error; like pilots growing careless by a long calm, we steer by the gust of passion, instead of the compass of understanding, heedless of the port of truth, and negligent of those duties to which the passions were only designed to urge us.

To point forth and familiarise these truths, has been the well handled subject of the best writers; but while nature continues to summon, and the wisdom of her voice remains in any measure neglected, the theme cannot be truly exhausted, nor the repetition of it needless.

For these ends, this Essay is presented to the public view, if it pass under the judgment of able minds, they will acquiesce in any truth, and at least may from hence take a hint for nobler thoughts; besides, there is a satisfaction we all feel in giving vent to the throbbings of the bosom, and in collecting to some order, those thoughts which float through the mind on such occasions.

Let this then be the apology; but if still any one should censure me for treading in this unaccustomed path of writing, I must quit the dispute and screen myself beneath the horrors of that never to be forgotten night, when the flames broke loose on our houses, and laid so large a part of our capital in ruins: I am sensible that painted terrors ill-become real sorrow, and are never to be used but when the passions are sluggish; and therefore passing over that ample field for description, which the late unhappy catastrophe affords, shall confine myself to those sober facts which no body should be ignorant of, and with which every body must needs be affected.

It was then in the first watches of the morning, when our bodies were fast fettered with soundest sleep, that the fire was first discovered, and the town alarmed with an out-cry; the inhabitants were speedily collected, and though the fire was found in the cellar of a brick house, yet it soon eat through its prison; the wind blowing fresh urged on the flames, and with surprising fury they ravaged in spite of all opposition or means to suppress them; the cinders and burning ruins were carried to the leewardmost part of the town, by means of which some who thought themselves in no danger, were the soonest consumed, and the inhabitants of them being gathered to assist at the head of the fire, suffered the greatest losses at their own houses; the like evil happened to numbers of tradesmen, whose shops were so quick fuel for the flames, that their tools and stock were all consumed before they could repair to them; in some places we heard the shrieks of mothers and children rouzed from their beds by the surrounding flames, and no man to help; here we might behold the aged, the sick and the bed-rid, whose distance from the seat of the fire gave them hopes of security, driven forth to the inclemencies of the weather, not knowing where to shelter; there we might see those whose least thoughts were placed on their substance, and whose greatest anxiety was to save their lives: Thus raged this fire, forcing its way at the windows of brick houses, whose slated roofs were thought a sufficient defence, thus adding burning to burning, till it left no building unconsumed where the wind would let it pass. The natural horrors of the night added terror to this catastrophe, and at once rendered it more dismal to the eye, more grevious to be born, and more difficult to be supressed, till the odious night wore out, and with it vanished the height of our fears; but not of the reality of our sorrow, the risen sun assuaged the gloom of the night, but gave us a dismal prospect of its havock; a spectacle shocking to sensibility! Like the blasted trees of summer, or the skeleton of some delightful body; yet far less ungrateful to the sight than sorrowful to be reflected on. Take a survey then of these extended ruins, here once lived the loyal subject, the tender father, the obliging friend, and a good commonwealths-man; but their habitations, as with one sweep of a scythe, are all cut off, and they thrown on the charity of their friends: And is this all? Alas there are still more heart-piercing-scenes; walk through the ruins, and take a more particular account; here lived the laborious tradesman, on whose daily industry depended the sustenance of a numerous family; there lived one whose circumstances were straitened with poverty, and distressed by sickness; here lived one just emerging from indigence, and reaping the first fruits of honest industry; there lived those whose comfortable circumstances afforded a refuge for the needy, and an habitation for the friendless; here lived those whose subsistence depended on their situation for business; there lived those whose all was in their houses, and here those who are still unhappily answerable for all they lost; there lived, and there was the subsistence of the aged and infirm, whose frugal industry in youth, had procured them the merited support of easy old age, when the body unstrung for labor can no longer support itself—But all cut off, their industry appears no more, and the fatigues of youth overtakes them, when age should be at rest; the children must beg, and the industrious must be dependent, the forehanded repeat his toil anew, and the debtor lay at mercy; the friendless must seek for other patrons, and they who patronized implore compassion; the affluent aged must forget their ease, and too soon lose the benefit of that substance which they could not carry hence.

Amazing shock! Is this the uncertainty of human life? Is it thus we have no abiding place here? Is it thus that the places that knew us shall know us no more? And do riches thus take to themselves wings? what a gust of passion breaks forth in all our minds? yet let us compose our thoughts, attend the voice of reason to those pleasant admonitions so loudly proclaimed by this dreadful catastrophe: What a lesion then is here of the uncertainty of earthly enjoyments! We lay ourselves down to our natural rest possessed of subsistence and affluence, and in a few hours we are awakened to take leave of

all. Where shall the miser bestow his hoards, or the extortioner his ill gotten gains, or how shall the worldly man secure his happiness when flames surround them? The huge pillars of smoak which we beheld floating to the sky were at once emblem atical of our possessions and declarative of their loss: But what say these mighty ruins? they shew us at how uncertain a tenure we hold our enjoyments, for next under a sovereign providence we seem indebted even to the stability of the wind that it did not vary and roll the flames over the whole town. With how much ease then can we shift the scene and suppose ourselves in the situation of the present distressed; was it our goodness, or vigilance that protected us? And if being destroyed, we should have felt sorrow; being so narrowly saved can we fail to melt with sympathy? and if ever the golden rule was capable of a benevolent application the most insensible must now feel it, and the most hardened put it in practice; and he who on this occasion does not bestow bountifully to the relief of the immediate sufferers, must either flatter himself with some peculiar infallible protection, or being desperate in giddiness, bid a bold defiance to all calamity. Nor can any one, though not immediately exposed to this destruction, or tho' distant from this capital, surmise that they have no part in its general admonition; 'tis nature's voice, that well known herald of the Almighty which tho' it be now uttered here, yet echoes every where; 'tis but one lash of that amazing scourge, brandished by the hand of vengeance, against a guilty world; the same fire may parch up that land which it does not consume, and earthquakes make its desolation worse than the present; if therefore we are common tenants of a state variegated with joy and sorrow, methinks 'tis natural we should in some measure share the good of it which we all want, seeing we are equally exposed to the evils of it, under which we all desire to be relieved.

O, my soul, what a thought arises! can it with truth be said, that any in human shape, though their daily support were robbery, should lurk for the confusion of a public calamity, and plunder the property of the distressed; or that any after cool deliberation, upon whatsoever pretence, should either publickly or privately discountenance that relief to the distressed which we may all at some time want, and which humanity suggests? forbid it heaven!

Alas, we sojourn in a vale of tears, sorrow on every side surrounds us, and calls for those duties which we feel impressed in our natures, duties so endeliably engraven, that a heathen said, "in nothing do we more imitate the immortal Gods, than in doing acts of kindness," the voice of revelation is still more explicit, and so plain, that he who runs may read. Possessions take to themselves wings; to what purpose is it then, that we distress, perplex and corrupt our minds in getting wealth, the possession of which is so precarious? With what face can we swell with the conceit of riches and assume airs of importance, disdain, oppress, and tyrannize over those beneath us (perhaps only) in fortune, when a few hours may set us all on a level? How much does it become us while in affluence to demean ourselves with such honesty, humanity and beneficence, as that if calamity should overtake us, we may stand confessedly the worthy objects of needful relief? Methinks this catastrophe is big with instruction, could any one see the dire havock produced from so small a fire, and not feel the obligations we owe to the community in our economy of this necessary but devouring element, and of every thing that is apt fuel for the same? for as our possessions are not secured by our own single carefulness, the duty therefore becomes general; and may I be permitted to take a hint from this dreadful desolation, and point it forth as an emblem of that destruction, which the passions when let loose produce in human minds; when the first excess is not suppressed, like the late fire they ravage, increase by running, and may destroy every thing valuable in the mind; may entirely strip us of that real treasure which only can stand us in stead when a greater conflagration shall seize this earth, when we shall be as little anxious to save our lives, as many lately were to save their worldly possessions.

Dr. *Mayhew*'s

DISCOURSE

ON THE

Death of K. GEORGE II.

And Acceſſion of K. GEORGE III.

A

DISCOURSE

Occaſioned by the Death of

King GEORGE II.

AND THE

Happy Acceſſion of His Majeſty

King GEORGE III.

TO THE

Imperial Throne of

GREAT-BRITAIN;

Delivered *Jan.* 4th 1761.

AND

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TO the Chriſtian, the Truly-Proteſtant, and very Loyal Society, who attend the public Worſhip in the Westerly Part of Boſton,

This Discourse, publiſhed at their Deſire ſignified by their *Committee*, is now gratefully inscribed, with the ſincereſt Wiſhes for their temporal and ſpiritual Welfare, and with due Acknowledgments of the many Obligations by them laid upon

The Author.

GOD ruleth in the Kingdom of Men.

DANIEL IV. 18.

—The most High ruleth in the Kingdom of Men—

THE present unusual and gloomy appearance of the place * in which I now stand, may seem the natural presage of a discourse replete with gloomy ideas, with lamentation and mourning. But yet methinks this is a season adapted to awaken various, and even contrary passions in our breasts; a season wherein we almost unavoidably mingle some of the tears of joy with those of sorrow; and wherein wholly to indulge, or wholly to repress either of them, would hardly be innocent; at least not very congruous. On one hand we justly mourn the death of an excellent king, whom every good British subject was habituated to consider rather under the amiable and endearing character of a father, than the more awful one of a sovereign. And where is the heart so hard, so unfeeling, so devoid of all sentiment, as to remain untouch'd, unaffected, at the death of such a king, the common father of his people? What bosom does not heave? What eye is not ready to overflow, on so melancholy an occasion?

BUT,

* In allusion to the pulpit hung with mourning on this occasion.

BUT, on the other hand, have we not cauſe for gratitude, that heaven ſpared him to us ſo long? and for joy, that his royal grandſon and ſucceſſor is peaceably aſcended the throne? And this at ſuch a mature age, and adorned with ſo many royal qualities, as give us the reaſonable proſpect of ſitting under his ſhadow with great delight; and, in a Word, of enjoying under his reign the continuance of all thoſe numerous bleſſings, which we ſo long enjoyed under the auſpicious reign of his late majeſty. The ſame object has often both a bright and a dark ſide; and, by being turned round, gives relief, or even pleaſure, to the pained eye of the ſpectator. As our felicity is never pure and unallayed in this evil world; ſo neither is our ſorrow ever, or hardly ever, unmixed; but uſually attended with ſome circumſtances, which, being duly conſidered, may adminiſter comfort to us. This is our preſent caſe: That ſovereign hand which gave the wound to our hearts by the death of his late majeſty, has almoſt healed it the ſame hour, and turned our mourning into joy; or if not into joy, has at leaſt miniſtred the beſt conſolation that the nature of the caſe would admit of. For the loſs of a good king cannot be any way ſo effectually made up, or remedied, as by another, worthy to ſucceed him, reigning in his ſtead; eſpecially one deſcended, from him, and in whom he may be conſidered as, in ſome ſort, ſtill living and reigning. Such is the conſolation that gracious heaven affords to us, and to three kingdoms, at this ſeaſon of our common mourning. And both reaſon and religion as much require that we gratefully receive the conſolation offered, as that we humbly lay to heart that event of providence, by which we came to need it.

IT

IT becomes us as men, and eſpecially as chriſtians, on this occaſion to look up to the ſovereign ruler of the univerſe, who " removeth kings and ſetteth up kings", as ſeemeth good in his ſight. Him we are to conſider as the author of thoſe revolutions, and other great changes, which take place from age to age in the kingdoms of this world ; and ſhould make a religious improvement of the preſent diſpenſations of his providence towards us. It is with a view at aſſiſting you in ſo important a duty, that I have choſen the words juſt now read, for the ſubject of my diſcourſe at this time—" The moſt High ruleth in the kingdom of men." The words occur three ſeveral times in this fourth chapter of Daniel ; which conſiſts of a manifeſto, or ſolemn declaration, which Nebuchadnezzar the great king of Babylon publiſhed " to all people, nations and languages"; and which the prophet, for the honor of God's name, thought proper, it ſeems, to preſerve intire with his own writings, to be tranſmitted to future generations. Nebuchadnezzar is ſpoken of in ſcripture as one of the greateſt monarchs that ever lived in the world. " Thou, O king", ſaid Daniel to him, " art a king of kings; for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and ſtrength and glory. And whereſoever the children of men dwell, the beaſts of the field, and the fowls of heaven hath he delivered into thy hand †". Prophane hiſtory ſpeaks of him conformably to this account ‖. He

 was

† Chap. II. ver. 37, 38.

‖ He is ſaid to have held in ſubjection Syria, Phenicia, Arabia and Egypt. " Strabo likewiſe aſſerts that this king among the Chaldeans was more celebrated than Hercules, and that he proceeded as far as the pillars of Hercules [near the ſtreights of Gibralter] and led his army out of Spain into Thrace and Pontus." Vid. Dr. Newton's XIIIth *Diſſertation on Prophecy.*

was as proud and impious as he was great. And God seems to have raised him up as he did Pharaoh, that he might "shew his power in him, and that his name might be declared throughout all the earth". It seems that he was for a time much alarmed, and even convinced, by the miraculous deliverance of the three pious Jews from the fiery furnace, whom he had ordered to be cast into it for not worshipping the golden image which he had set up; and he made a decree, that no one should speak against the God whom these men worshipped.* But his heart, like Pharaoh's, resumed its former hardness; and was so lifted up with pride, that God resolved to humble him in a very signal manner. And the main design of his manifesto, contained in this IVth Chapter of Daniel, is to declare to all the world the wonderful means by which God did this; by which he convinced him of his supreme dominion, his power and providence, and the wisdom and justice of all his dealings with the children of men. So that this may be called the proclamation whereby that mighty, and once impious monarch, recognized God's universal dominion, as the King of kings and Lord of lords. "I thought it good",," says he, "to shew the signs and wonders that the high God hath wrought towards me. For how great are his signs? and how mighty are his wonders? His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom", &c. He then proceeds particularly to relate what had happened to him; the astonishing signs by which God humbled his proud heart, and made him confess, that he indeed "ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will." What these signs and wonders were, I now forbear particularly to mention, lest my discourse should be drawn out to too great a length. But in general, he had

* Dan. C. III. v. 29.

a remarkable dream, or viſion, wherein, under the ſimilitude of cutting down a mighty tree, was, according to the prophet's interpretation, prefigured his own fall from his greatneſs, and his being driven from men. And when the king ſaid, " Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the houſe of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majeſty? While the word was in the kings mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, ſaying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is ſpoken, The kingdom is departed from thee," &c. And " the ſame hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar." Of which event we find the prophet afterwards giving the following account to his ſon Belſhazzar——" All people, nations and languages trembled and feared before him: whom he would he ſlew, and whom he would he kept alive, and whom he would he ſet up, and whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was depoſed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him: And he was driven from the ſons of men—till he knew that the moſt high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomſoever he will †."

THUS wonderfully was this great king brought down, till at the end of the days appointed, he lift up his eyes to heaven, and his underſtanding returned unto him. And he concludes his proclamation in the ſtrong and emphatical terms following, which diſcover an heart very deeply impreſt with what had befallen him for his former pride, tyranny and impiety —" Now I Nebuchadnezzar", ſays he, " praiſe, and extol, and honor the king of heaven, all whoſe works are truth, and his ways judgment; and thoſe that walk in pride he is able to abaſe". BUT

† Chap. V. ver. 19, 20, 21.

But to return; The words of the text may be conſidered as an intire, independent ſentence, tho' they indeed make but a part of one, as they ſtand in the ſeveral places where they occur in this chapter. In this light it is propoſed to conſider them; and they will, I ſuppoſe, be a proper introduction to ſome reflexions on the preſent occaſion, as they aſſert God's ſupreme dominion in and over the kingdoms of men.

FOR the illuſtration of this ſubject, it is to be obſerved firſt in general,

I. THAT all nations, all kingdoms, are in the hand of God, who has an original right, and abſolute power over them. He hath made of one blood all nations for to dwell upon the face of the earth; and has the intire diſpoſal of them. The abſolute ſovereignty of God over all nations, is repreſented in very ſtrong and ſublime language by Nebuchadnezzar in this chapter, after his reaſon returned to him. "His kingdom", ſaith he, "is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay unto him, What doeſt thou?" The prophet Iſaiah expreſſeth himſelf upon this ſubject in language not leſs emphatical. "Behold, the nations are as a drop of the bucket', ſaith he, "and are counted as the ſmall duſt of the balance: behold, he taketh up the iſles as a very little thing — all nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him as leſs than nothing and vanity". And a little after in the ſame chapter—"It is he that ſitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as graſshoppers; that ſtretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and ſpreadeth

eth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth the princes to nothing: He maketh the judges of the earth as vanity". [Chap. XL.]

Now, God's ruling in the kingdom of men, expreſſeth in general that ſupreme power, that uncontroulable dominion, which he exerciſeth over all nations from one generation to another: Not only his right and power, but his actual government over them. For his ruling in the kingdom of men, implies his continual agency and providence therein, and his reigning over them as a ſovereign Lord; not merely his power and authority to do ſo. And accordingly, whatever befals ſtates and kingdoms; their riſe, enlargement and proſperity, their fall, their declenſion, and the various calamities that happen to them, are in ſcripture attributed to God's over-ruling providence, as the accompliſhment of his ſovereign pleaſure concerning them. And that theſe things are juſtly aſcribed to him, is evident from many conſiderations; particularly from his having enabled his prophets to foretel, many ages before-hand, the changes and revolutions which ſhould take place among the nations of the earth: Which predictions have been punctually verified by the event.

THUS the ancient prophecies reſpecting the Jews, the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Ninevites, the Tyrians, and many other nations, have long ſince had a moſt exact and ſurpriſing accompliſhment; as any one, acquainted with the prophecies, and with what has ſince actually befallen thoſe nations, muſt acknowledge †. And in this book of Daniel's prophecies,

† Many of theſe predictions, together with their reſpective accompliſhments, are ſet in a clear and ſtrong light in the Rev. and very learned Dr. Newton's Diſſertations on prophecy, Vol. I.

cies, was foretold, with an aſtoniſhing preciſion, tho' in figurative language, what ſhould come to paſs in the four great ſucceſſive monarchies, or empires of the world; the Aſſyrian or Babylonian, the Medo-Perſian, the Macedonian and the Roman; in, or during, the latter of which, the God of heaven was to ſet up a kingdom of a peculiar kind, which ſhould never have an end, or be left to other people: "And the kingdom, and the dominion, and the greatneſs of the kingdom under the whole heaven, ſhall [at length] be given to the people of the ſaints of the moſt High, whoſe kingdom is an everlaſting kingdom; and all dominions ſhall ſerve and obey him"*. Nor is the preſent ſtate of the Jews, or indeed the general ſtate of the chriſtian world at this day, any thing leſs than a demonſtration of the truth of prophecy: which is, at the ſame time, a kind of viſible demonſtration of the truth and reality of God's ruling in the kingdom of men. For, certainly none but he, who hath the fates and fortunes of all nations in his own hand, and the moſt abſolute diſpoſal of them, could poſſibly enable men ſo particularly and exactly to foretel what ſhould befal them in remote ages, as the prophets have actually done. And the accompliſhment of ſo many prophecies already, as it is an undeniable proof that the world is governed by divine providence, ſo it gives us an aſſurance, that thoſe predictions in theſe ſacred books, which ſtill remain unfulfilled, ſhall alſo have their accompliſhment at the appointed time; when "the myſtery of God ſhall be finiſhed, as he hath declared to his ſervants the prophets". But,

II. GOD's ruling in the kingdom of men, may expreſs more particularly and directly that authority and ſovereign power, which he exerciſeth from age to

* Chap. VII. ver. 27.

to age over the kings and potentates of the earth; and which truly denominate him the King of kings and Lord of lords. *That* being may well be ſaid to rule in the kingdom of men, on whom all earthly kings are entirely dependent; who raiſeth one to a throne, and caſteth down another; who gives to all kings their authority, and limits them in the exerciſe thereof; who gives them whatever qualifications they have for ruling; who alſo gives to their lives and reigns, either a ſhorter or longer term, as he pleaſeth; who makes their reign either a bleſſing to the kingdoms which they govern, or the contrary; and who will finally judge even them in righteouſneſs. With the greateſt truth and propriety may he be ſaid to rule and govern in the kingdom of men, who exerciſeth ſuch a dominion over the monarchs of the world. And to enlarge a little here cannot, I ſuppoſe, be thought improper on the preſent occaſion.

1. GOD ruleth in the kingdom of men, as all earthly kings derive their power and authority originally from him; or as they reign by his permiſſion and providence, and as his miniſters. This is in effect aſſerted in the words immediately following the text— "and giveth it" [i. e. the kingdom] "to whomſoever he will", in the exerciſe of that ſovereign dominion which he hath over all. In conformity whereto, the prophet addreſſeth himſelf thus to Belſhazzar, the ſon and ſucceſſor of Nebuchadnezzar. "O thou king, the moſt high God *gave* Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majeſty, and glory, and honor †." And the apoſtle Paul aſſerts in a more general way, and without any exception, that "there is no power but of God"; that "the powers that be are ordained of God"; and that kings, and indeed other inferior rulers, are "God's miniſters", appointed

† Chap. V. ver. 18.

pointed to govern the world under him, the Lord of all; and to carry on the designs of his providence therein. So that human government, being duly administred, is in effect the government of God. For which reason we are admonished to be subject "to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well *."

GOD does not indeed, by any immediate act of his own, place a crown upon the head, and put a sceptre in the hand of him, whom he has ordained to reign, and seat him upon a royal throne. He leaves nations (ordinarily, I mean) to the free exercise of their liberty and discretion, under the general law of reason, to chuse their own forms of government, and to model them as best suits them respectively. Some nations neither have, nor are required to have, any kings at all. Some crowns are, properly speaking, elective, by the fundamental laws of the kingdom. In other kingdoms the crown is hereditary, either with certain limitations and exceptions, or without any, according to the various constitutions of different kingdoms; which constitutions themselves are not, however, absolutely immutable. In all which respects it may truly be said, that nations are left to the exercise of their natural discretion and liberty. But still religion, and even reason, teaches us to acknowledge the hand and providence of God in the exaltation of any particular person to a throne. In elective kingdoms the thoughts and counsels of the electors are, tho' imperceptibly, so over-ruled, that the choice falls at last upon him, whom God had ordained to reign; and thus, without knowing his purpose, they fulfil his sovereign

* 1 Pet. II. 13, 14.

ſovereign pleaſure. And where the crown is hereditary according to the conſtitution, God in his providence often interrupts and defeats the ſucceſſion, either by the death of the preſumptive heir, or by other means; and ſometimes the crown devolves at laſt to one, ſo remote from it by blood, that he was very unlikely ever to wear it, according to human rules of judging; or it is perhaps transferred to another race. Theſe things are common, and well known; by which God ſhews his own ſovereignty in the kingdom of men, and makes it manifeſt that he "gives it to whomſoever he will".

2. GOD ruleth in the kingdom of men, as all earthly kings derive from him whatever qualifications and abilities they have for reigning, as well as their authority. How great? how important, is the difference between a wiſe and good, and a weak and bad king? The welfare of nations, under God, depends very much upon the talents and character of the kings, whom he exalteth to reign over them. Nor is it leſs evident that he beſtows the various gifts and talents by which kings are diſtinguiſhed from one another, than it is that they reign by his permiſſion, and providential ordination. Wiſdom, magnanimity, and other royal qualities, are the gift of God; of which none are poſſeſſed in any greater degree, than he ſaw fit to beſtow them, in order to accompliſh his own wiſe and holy purpoſes. And from ſome theſe qualities are withheld, with the ſame general deſign. For, according to the holy ſcriptures, important events are brought about in nations, and in the ſtate of the world, as well by the folly and infatuation of ſome kings, as by the wiſdom of others; all in conformity to the will and purpoſes of heaven. And this is one way, in which God manifeſts his own ſovereignty in the kingdom of men.

3. GOD ruleth in the kingdom of men, by ſucceeding the adminiſtration of kings, and by making them great public bleſſings, or the contrary, according to his own pleaſure. Moſt commonly indeed, wiſe and good kings reign ſucceſsfully, while weak and wicked ones prove rather a curſe than a bleſſing. This is not, however, univerſally the caſe. It is obvious that the ſucceſs or proſperity of an adminiſtration, does not ſolely depend upon, nor is always in exact proportion to, the wiſdom, juſtice, fortitude, and other princely virtues of him that ſits upon the throne. The views and endeavours of the beſt kings are ſometimes fruſtrated; while thoſe of far inferior ones are crowned with ſucceſs, both in peace and war. It is God that giveth ſalvation unto kings, and thereby to kingdoms: He it is, that bringeth them down. And both theſe he does, in ſuch ways, and by ſuch means, as plainly evince his ſovereignty in the kingdom of men; and ſhew to kings and kingdoms at once, their abſolute dependence upon him for proſperity. How many great and common calamities are there, which befal nations from time to time, that the wiſeſt and moſt powerful monarchs can neither prevent nor remove? And how many public bleſſings are there, which kings have little, or perhaps no hand at all, in procuring? Riches, and honor, and power, and all national bleſſings, muſt be acknowledged to come originally from God, ſometimes by the inſtrumentality of kings, and ſometimes without it; and in his "hand it is to make great, and to give ſtrength unto all".

4. GOD ruleth in the kingdom of men, as he gives to the reign of earthly kings either a ſhorter or longer term, as ſeemeth good in his ſight. Mighty monarchs are ſometimes "depoſed from their kingly thrones" for their ſins, as Nebuchadnezzar was. When his mind

mind was hardened in pride, it was said unto him, "The kingdom is departed from thee"; and instantly, his glory was taken away, and he was "driven from men". Belshazzar his son did not profit by his example; and therefore met with a still more fatal overthrow. No sooner had the hand upon the wall written his doom, and Daniel interpreted it,—"God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it", &c. than he was slain; "and Darius the Median took the kingdom". How many other proud, arbitrary and tyrannical princes, who have thought themselves above all controul, have suddenly been brought down to the dust? either expelled their kingdoms, or come to an untimely end, and left their thrones to others? Nor is the sovereignty of God in the kingdom of men, less manifested in depriving earthly kings of their power and dominion, than in conferring them at first. In the language of the royal psalmist, "Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another †."

BESIDES: It is appointed unto all men, and no less to kings, even great and good kings, than others, once to die; and to give an account of themselves to God. Their greatness exempts them neither from the common mortality, nor from the righteous judgment of God, in whose hand their breath is. From some the great arbiter of life and death, soon taketh away their breath, even in early youth; so that they hardly know what it is to wear a crown, before they are commanded to resign it; and called to appear before the high tribunal of him that "regardeth not the persons of princes". Other kings are taken away in the midst of their years; and all their devices, pro-

 jections

† Psalm LXXV. 6, 7.

jections and designs, whether good or bad, are at once brought to nothing; sometimes to the joy, and sometimes to the sorrow of their subjects; and not only of their own subjects, but of other nations. To other kings God is pleased to grant length of days, and a reign of many years; so that they are satisfied with life, and see many happy effects of their reign, before their days are numbered and finished. Now, God manifesteth his sovereignty over the kings and potentates of the earth, by cutting short, or protracting their life and reign, in this manner: And hereby, in part, it appears, that he indeed ruleth in the kingdom of men.

It may, not improperly, be added here, that a great deal depends upon the time, and particular circumstances, wherein kings are taken out of this world. There are, with respect to their subjects at least, I might say with respect to themselves also, both favourable and unfavourable conjunctures for them to die in. As the case may be circumstanced, the death of a king, tho' of no very eminent qualities and vertues, may be of fatal consequence to a kingdom: As, for example, when the succession is left doubtful, different persons laying claim to it, and each of them supported by powerful factions. In this case, how often have nations been thrown into confusion, and involved in all the calamities of a civil war? Or, tho' the succession is uncontroverted, yet if the heir be not arrived at an age proper for governing a kingdom, the death of a king in these circumstances is a great calamity: For "Wo to thee, O Land," says Solomon, "when thy king is a child." God sometimes chastiseth nations by removing their kings at such unfavourable conjunctures as these, and others that might easily be [illegible] And tho' the death of

of good kings will always be ſincerely lamented by good and dutiful ſubjects; yet it muſt be owned that, in certain circumſtances, the death even of ſuch kings can hardly be looked upon as a frown of divine providence, in any other ſenſe than that, in which the common mortality of mankind is ſo. As, for example, if they die when they are far advanced in years; when they are almoſt paſt bearing the weight of government; when their kingdoms are in flouriſhing circumſtances; when the ſucceſſion is undiſputed; or there are no parties or factions powerful enough to create public troubles and commotions; when the ſucceſſor is of mature age for wielding a ſceptre, and is endowed with ſuch princely virtues, as naturally inſpire the hopes of great happineſs under his reign: When all theſe circumſtances take place, they greatly alleviate that ſorrow which all good ſubjects muſt in ſome degree feel, on the death of a good king. And God's ſovereignty in the kingdoms of men plainly appears by the particular time and conjuncture, wherein he removeth kings out of this world: For, that theſe circumſtances, whether favourable or otherwiſe, together with the duration of each monarch's life, and the length of his reign, are all fixed, all determined by the moſt High, no man who believes a providence, can conſiſtently doubt.

UPON the whole (for I muſt not enlarge): God does not only ſhew himſelf ſovereign in the kingdom of men, by the perſons whom he exalteth to earthly thrones, by the various qualifications which he beſtows upon them, by proſpering or not proſpering their reign, by ſometimes caſting them down from their thrones before their lives are come to a period, and by the particular time and circumſtances wherein they are reſpectively taken out of this world by death:

He

He does not hereby only ſhew his ſovereign power in and over the kingdom of men, but he alſo manifeſts hereby his favor and goodneſs towards nations, or his righteous diſpleaſure. He executeth loving-kindneſs, judgment and righteouſneſs in the earth, by the diſpenſations of his providence towards kings and kingdoms. The welfare of nations immediately depends, in a great meaſure, upon the kings whom God placeth over them. It is ſaid of Iſrael, with reference to Saul, that God "gave them a king in his anger." After a while, he brought about a *revolution* in that kingdom, and gave them David in his kindneſs, a man after his own heart, who was a great bleſſing to the nation. And when David died in a good old age, after a proſperous reign, and when he had in a manner ſubdued all their enemies, his ſon Solomon ſucceeded him in the throne, whom the queen of Sheba addreſſed in the equally pious and courtly terms following: "Bleſſed be the Lord thy "God which delighted in thee to ſet thee upon his "throne, to be king for the Lord thy God. Becauſe "thy God loved Iſrael, to eſtabliſh them forever, "therefore made he thee king over them to do "judgment and juſtice."

IT being evident then, from what has been ſaid, that God ruleth in the kingdom of men, giving it to whomſoever he will; and alſo, that his favor and righteous diſpleaſure are manifeſted towards different nations, or towards the ſame nations at different times, by the "manner of the kings that reign over them", and by the time and circumſtances of their removal out of this world: Theſe things being evident, I ſay, what ſtill remains, is, that we apply this ſubject to ourſelves, and to the preſent occaſion, by making ſome reflexions on the reign and death of his late majeſty,

and

and on the acceſſion of George III. to the imperial throne of Great-Britain.

AND it will not, as is humbly conceived, be improper here, in the firſt place, to take a curſory view of the providential means, by which the Britiſh crown devolved to the illuſtrious houſe of Hanover, and conſequently to his late, and his preſent majeſty. For ſuch a retroſpect on the events of divine providence, at the ſame time that it will be a farther illuſtration of God's ruling in the kingdom of men, and giving it to whomſoever he will, may alſo ſerve to eſtabliſh us in the principles of true Britiſh liberty, and of loyalty to his preſent majeſty, as founded in, and reſulting from, thoſe principles. Nor will you, I am perſuaded, think I go beyond my proper ſphere, if, upon ſuch an occaſion, I inculcate loyalty, and obedience to the eſtabliſhed government; and this upon the very principles on which that government is founded, in oppoſition to thoſe of deſpotiſm and tyranny.

LET me remind you then, that after the death † of queen Elizabeth, (the glory of whoſe reign, otherwiſe truly great, was obſcur'd and tarniſhed by religious perſecution) it pleaſed God, doubtleſs for the ſins of the nation, to raiſe four princes ſucceſſively to the throne, whoſe reigns were all inglorious, and ſome of them infamous to the laſt degree; princes of great pride and vanity, of arbitrary notions and practices, of little wiſdom, policy or diſcretion, and ſtill leſs truth, ſincerity and honor; princes who were always the dupes of our ancient, enterpriſing and dangerous enemies, of jeſuits, popiſh miniſters or popiſh wives; princes whoſe reigns diſgraced the nation abroad, and were ſore viſitations of divine providence upon it. THE

† In the year 1603.

THE laſt of theſe four kings whom the moſt High gave us in his anger, James II, * was an open, profeſſed and bigotted roman-catholic; who ſtuck at no meaſures in order to introduce the religion of Rome, to deſpoil the Britiſh nations of their ancient liberties, and to entail upon them the two-fold curſe of popery and ſlavery; which have indeed a cloſe connexion one with the other. The king daily made prodigious ſtrides towards a deſpotic power; to eſtabliſh which on the ruins of the Britiſh conſtitution, was his manifeſt aim. And he doubtleſs promiſed himſelf ſucceſs in this execrable deſign, by reflecting on that ſeries of events in and after the reign of his father, from which he ought to have drawn other concluſions. That unhappy prince, king Charles I. by favouring the papiſts contrary to law, and many flagrant violations of the conſtitution, had involved the nation in a civil war; a war entered into on one ſide, in defence of public liberty, on the other, in the ſupport of tyranny; and which did not end but with the ruin, both of the conſtitution, and of the infatuated prince who had been the blameable cauſe of it. King James ſeem'd to take it for granted, that the nation would never again, at leaſt not ſo ſoon, have recourſe to arms, or reſiſtance, in defence of its rights and liberties; but rather ſubmit to the moſt cruel tyranny, than attempt to rid itſelf of it by thoſe means which, however neceſſary, had been attended with ſuch diſmal conſequences: Eſpecially as the doctrine of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance had, ever ſince the *reſtoration*, † been the eſtabliſhed doctrine, which no one could contradict with impunity. It had, however, been a more juſt, as well as more ſafe inference, that the brave people who had lately made ſuch

* He ſucceeded his brother Charles II. in 1684.

† In 1660.

ſuch efforts in defence of their liberties, would not now tamely ſubmit to arbitrary ſway; but again have recourſe to ſome extraordinary means of ſelf-defence, if driven to extremities, whatever doctrines they might profeſs to believe. But— *Quem Deus vult perdere, priùs dementat*— Thoſe whom God deſigns to deſtroy, he firſt infatuates; ſo that they reſolutely perſiſt in ſuch meaſures, as muſt needs terminate in their ruin. The king was deaf to all the remonſtrances of reaſon and juſtice, of policy and intereſt; and would ſuffer no check in his mad career to deſtruction. Nor was there, perhaps, ever another king, to whom the words of the prophet to Belſhazzar, were more applicable than to this prince, whom neither the fate of his unhappy father, nor any thing elſe, could keep from deſtroying himſelf— "O thou king, the moſt high "God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom— "But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind "hardened in pride, he was depoſed from his kingly "throne, and they took his glory from him. And "he was driven from the ſons of men, and his heart "was made like the beaſts, and his dwelling was with "the wild aſſes——And thou his ſon, O Belſhazzar, "haſt not humbled thine heart, THOUGH THOU KNEW-"EST ALL THIS! But haſt lifted up thy ſelf,"* &c.

IN this critical conjuncture, it pleaſed him who ruleth in the kingdom of men, not only to open the eyes of all the friends to public liberty and the proteſtant religion, to ſee the common danger which threatned them, but alſo to unite their hearts and counſels in an extraordinary manner to guard againſt it. Party-diſtinctions, which had hitherto run very high, were now laid aſide. The illuſtrious prince of Orange, the king's ſon-in-law, who was known to be at once a lo-

* Dan. V. 18.

ver of liberty, a true proteſtant and an hero, was ſecretly applied to for his advice and aſſiſtance, which he generouſly reſolved to afford, to the utmoſt of his ability. He accordingly, after mature deliberation, and by concert with the leading and better part of the lords and commons of England, arrived there with a very conſiderable armament†; but relying chiefly on the known good-will and affection of the people in general, whom a ſenſe of their common danger had united. It was not long after his arrival, that king James, conſcious he had juſtly forfeited, and intirely loſt, the affections of all his ſubjects, except the romancatholic party; ſeeing himſelf forſaken, and people of all ranks flocking to the ſtandard of the prince; calling to remembrance, doubtleſs, the tragedy of the 30th of *January* 1648; and not being ambitious, it ſeems, to ſhare with his father the glory of *martyrdom*;* thought proper to provide for his ſafety by a precipitate flight into France: Which court had before graciouſly offer'd him her aſſiſtance in his deſign to enſlave the Britiſh nations. † Then it was, that the glorious REVOLUTION took place: For the throne being declared vacant by two grand conventions of the lords and commons, by means of the *abdication*, i. e. the *running away* of king

† Nov 5. 1688.

* This ſort of *martyrdom* was very common in ancient times, according to that of the poet——

—— —— "Sine cæde et ſanguine pauci
"Deſcendunt reges*, et ſiccâ morte tyranni."
Juv. Sat. X.

Few tyrants to the grave in peace deſcend;
Abhorr'd they live, and *bloody is their end.*

* *King* and *Tyrant* were almoſt ſynonimous and convertible terms with the Latin poets, orators and hiſtorians: For they hardly knew of any kings, but what were alſo tyrants; and had ſcarely the idea of ſuch a limitted, legal monarchy, as Britiſh ſubjects have the happineſs of living under.

† France had offered him 30,000 men to ſupport his tyranny.

king James, the prince and princeſs of Orange were *elected*, and invited into it; and ſoon proclaimed king and queen, to the great joy of all the true friends to liberty. The adminiſtration was, however, to be ſolely in the hands of the king, during his life. In bringing about which happy revolution, even many of thoſe, both clergy and laity, heartily joined, who had before been loud and clamorous in aſſerting the ſenſeleſs, brutiſh principles of paſſive obedience and non-reſiſtance, in conſequence of the ſuppoſed divine, indefeaſable right of kings by inheritance: Opinions now exploded by all men of ſenſe. ‡

THIS was a new and memorable æra in the Engliſh hiſtory. The *declaration of rights* preſented and read to William and Mary, when they were invited into the throne, aſcertained the rights of the ſubject, and reduced the prerogative, which had been extended beyond all bounds in many preceeding reigns, to its antient limits. It was declared by the two conventions before-mentioned, that the kings of England held the crown by virtue of an "original contract," in oppoſition to the notions of an indefeaſeable hereditary right: And this was the baſis on which the government was ſettled. Proviſion was now made by many

D 2 parliamentary

‡ "Mr. HAMPDEN. It is a diſgrace to our church to have taken up ſuch opinions; and I will venture to propheſy, that "in future times our clergy muſt renounce them, or they "will be turned againſt them by thoſe who mean their de-"ſtruction. Suppoſe a *popiſh king* on the throne. Will "the clergy adhere to paſſive obedidence & non-reſiſtance? "If they do, they deliver up their religion to Rome; if they "do not, their practice will confute their own doctrine.

"Lord FAULKLAND. Nature, Sir, will in time beſure to ſet "right whatever opinion contradicts her great laws, let who "will be the teacher." ——

Dialogues of the Dead, Dial. I.
Reputed Author, Ld. LYTTLETON,

parliamentary acts, for securing the public liberty, and the future peace and prosperity of the nation. To which ends, amongst other things, the succession to the crown was limited to the protestant line of the royal family, and all romancatholics, however nearly related to it by blood, declared forever incapable of reigning in England. The like was done in North-Britain, at that time a distinct kingdom.

KING William and Queen Mary being dead without leaving issue, the princess Ann, a protestant, and a daughter of the then lately out-lawed king James, ascended the throne in conformity to the parliamentary settlement of the succession. In her reign the union between North and South-Britain, which king William had zealously recommended before, was happily accomplished. An union, which the author of nature had pointed out between two nations on the same island; both lovers of liberty, both brave and warlike, both generally protestant; mutually standing in need of one another's assistance against their common enemies; and whose situation, and martial spirit, whenever they were at variance, had render'd them sore scourges to each other. Queen Ann, tho' a Stewart, reigned not without reputation and glory, till one or two of the last years of her life, when she had fallen into the hands of bad ministers and counsellors. Her son, the duke of Glocester, who was otherwise to have succeeded her, died the year before she came to the throne. ‡ So that the elector of Hanover was now the presumptive heir to the crown. But the queen was suspected, and not without some good reasons, of a design to set aside, if possible,

‡ He died in 1700, being in the 11th year of his age. He was a prince of great hopes, whose father was prince George of Denmark, the queen's husband.

poſſible, the proteſtant ſucceſſion in that illuſtrious houſe, in favour of her [doubtful] brother, the chevalier de St. George; who, whether he were or were not, the ſon of the then late king James, was yet excluded from the throne by law, as a romancatholic. Some, indeed, deny that the queen had any ſuch intention; and that, with as much confidence as others aſſert it. But be that as it may, upon her death §, the elector of Hanover (George I.) was immediately, and without oppoſition, proclaimed king of Great-Britain, in conformity to the parliamentary ſettlement of the ſucceſſion, confirmed by repeated acts in both the preceeding reigns. He was a proteſtant, nearly related to the crown by blood; at leaſt nearer than any other proteſtant prince, or princeſs, then living †. And he reigned with wiſdom, juſtice and clemency, tho' not without ſome diſturbances, and one open rebellion, raiſed in favour of the pretender. He died in the 13th year of his reign, leaving behind him the character of one of the wiſeſt, juſteſt, and moſt magnanimous princes of his age. And on the death of this truly great and good king, the Britiſh crown devolved, by the right of ſucceſſion as limited by parliament, to his late majeſty king George II. ‡

By this brief deduction you ſee, on one hand, the repeated efforts of tyranny, and on the other, the glorious ſtruggles for liberty, of which Britain was the ſcene for many years. You ſee how God ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomſoever he will. You ſee how mercifully he delivered the Britiſh nations from one popiſh and arbitrary king at

§ In 1714.

† The mother of K. George I. was a grand-daughter of K. James I. A princeſs of a very diſtinguiſhed character.

‡ Anno 1727.

at the revolution; and how he preſerved it once and again from another; I mean the pretender, whom many perſons were deſirous of introducing, to the prejudice of the proteſtant ſucceſſion. You ſee how God has been the guardian of our liberties, civil and ſacred. You ſee that Britiſh ſubjects have the happineſs of living under a legal and limited monarchy; and, what are ſome of the fundamental principles, on which the preſent government is eſtabliſhed. In fine, you ſee by what right the princes of the houſe of Hanover have aſcended the Britiſh throne; not a chimerical and imaginary, but a ſolid, legal and parliamentary one: The beſt and moſt indiſputable right, that any king can poſſibly reign by, unleſs God himſelf ſhould, by a voice from heaven, proclaim him king, or require us, by a prophet, to pay our allegiance to him as ſuch.

But ſome may poſſibly expect, that I ſhould ſay ſomething more particularly concerning his late majeſty. And indeed, tho' I cannot pretend to give his juſt character, yet it would be hardly decent to paſs over his many royal virtues in ſilence; or to bury ſo good and venerable a king, without recollecting ſome of thoſe things, which ought to make us honour his memory.

His late majeſty was unqueſtionably endow'd with a brillant genius; with a great ſhare of natural penetration and ſagacity. Nor was that genius uncultivated by learning; ſuch learning eſpecially as becomes a king. He is ſaid to have been extremely well verſed in hiſtory, particularly that of Europe; and to have had a very thorough underſtanding of the political intereſts and connexions of all the kingdoms and ſtates therein. Without which it would indeed have

have been impoſſible for him to maintain his character as the chief bulwark of its liberties, and of the proteſtant religion, as he actually was. As he came into England at about thirty two years of age, and lived there about twelve years before he came to the throne, he had, during that period, an opportunity to acquaint himſelf, not only with the Britiſh conſtitution, but with the peculiar temper and genius of the people. Nor could he fail to reap great advantage from the inſtitutions, the political maxims, and the example of ſo wiſe a king, as his royal father. And he was, like him, what may be properly called, a conſtitutional king: One who well knew both the extent of his own prerogative, and the rights of the people; one who made the laws the rule of his government, and whom even malice can hardly accuſe of either doing, or attempting to do, an arbitrary, illegal thing, during his whole reign. And it ſhould be remember'd here, that the Britiſh conſtitution and laws are ſo wiſe, ſo excellent, that he who uniformly makes them the rule of his adminiſtration, muſt of conſequence be a good king; at leaſt he cannot eaſily be ſuppoſed to be a bad one.

AND merely not to have been a bad king, is perhaps grater praiſe than is due to far the moſt of thoſe, who have reigned from the days of Nimrod to the preſent time. But to ſtop here, would be very injurious to the character and memory of his late majeſty. He appeared, throughout his reign, to have the true intereſt and honour of Great-Britain at heart; knowing that kings, eſpecially Britiſh kings, are made for the people, and not people for kings. Notwithſtanding ſome [to us] unhappy, but yet neceſſary and unavoidable *connexions*, we have reaſon to think that his majeſty's uniform and great aim was, to promote the

the good of his kingdoms. He was indeed indefatigable in his endeavours to this end; and, in the language of the apoſtle, "attended continually on this very thing". He was an encourager of learning, of manufactures and commerce; the two latter of which, I ſuppoſe, never flouriſhed ſo much in Great-Britan, as under his auſpicious reign.

HIS majeſty was at once a prince of great juſtice and great clemency. The former was evident from his care to have the laws duly executed, without reſpect of perſons; and his not allowing the meaneſt of his ſubjects to be oppreſſed, ſo far as it was in the power of a Britiſh king to prevent it. Nor were private property, the life and rights of the ſubject, ever more ſecure perhaps, than under his adminiſtration. His majeſty's clemency appeared in many inſtances; but in none more conſpicuouſly, than in his conduct towards thoſe who were engaged in the black rebellion of 1745. Very few examples were made of royal juſtice, after that horrid rebellion was at a period. But how many traitors, even obliged, and therefore ungrateful ones, were made examples of the royal grace! His majeſty had a greatneſs of mind, which made him chuſe rather to reclaim his rebellious ſubjects by his lenity, than to rid himſelf of them by a juſtifiable ſeverity. And there is reaſon to think, that this truly god-like method of proceeding had a great and happy effect; and was the means, not only of reconciling, but ſtrongly attaching to his perſon and government, many people who had been unreaſonably diſaffected thereto before.

HIS majeſty, like his royal father, was a prince of an heroic and martial ſpirit: A lover, indeed, of peace; but one who would not ſuffer himſelf or his ſubjects

to

to be injured, without taking up the ſword, when that meaſure became neceſſary. He was a king, not only of great ſpirit and reſolution, and the moſt undaunted fortitude; but one who well knew how to command armies in the field, when there was occaſion for it: Of which he gave ſome not inglorious proofs.

HIS majeſty was a prince, even by the confeſſion of his enemies, many of them at leaſt, of great ſincerity and truth, of ſtrict probity and honor, in all his public tranſactions, both towards his own ſubjects and towards foreign ſtates and kingdoms. He was far above that deceit, artifice, and low-cunning, for which moſt of the Stewart race were ſo eminent, the *royal martyr* himſelf not excepted. In ſhort, his whole reign was a confutation of that infamous Machiavellian maxim, "Qui neſcit diſſimulare, neſcit regnare"—He that knows not how to diſſemble, is ignorant of the art of reigning.

IT was intimated above, that his majeſty was a true proteſtant. As ſuch he was a friend to toleration, and religious liberty; which cannot indeed be violated without violating the natural rights of mankind. His majeſty did not affect, as *defender of the faith*, to make his own private judgment and conſcience a rule to his ſubjects, or to tyrannize over their conſciences. Nor did he, as *head of the church* by law eſtabliſhed in England, endeavour to deſtroy the church equally eſtabliſhed by law in Scotland; or deſire to diſtreſs any of his good proteſtant ſubjects, who might, in ſome reſpects, diſſent from them both. Some inconveniencies and hardſhips, I mean legal ones, theſe latter might indeed be ſubjected to; which there is ground to think, a prince of ſo great equity and goodneſs, was ſo far from being pleaſed with, that he would have been

glad to see them wholly removed. Happy had it been for the British nations, if all his predecessors in the throne had been of such generous and catholic principles—The true church of Christ needs not to have her faith *defended* by any other weapons, than those of sober reason and argument, unless it be against those who attack it with carnal ones. Indeed wicked men and hypocrites can hardly ever think *their* church secure, unless some other sword besides that of the spirit, is drawn in her defence. Tho' she have kings for her nursing-fathers, and queens for her nursing-mothers; tho' she be rocked in a princely cradle, and sweetly charm'd to her *repose* with royal lullabies; yet so perverse are some of her children, that they can take no rest, unless others, out of her pale, are put upon the rack, or otherwise harrassed with penal laws—But, blessed be God, all our royal defenders of the faith, since James II, have been content to be nursing-fathers to the church, by preserving the public peace, toleration, and liberty of conscience: The happy effects whereof have been very apparent in many respects. And considering the known justice and moderation of the royal house of Hanover, and also of other eminent and distinguished personages in church and state, we need not wholly despair of seeing the time, when all good protestants, and loyal subjects, shall have their share in the honors and emoluments of the state, without being subjected to any narrow-spirited, and injurious *tests*.

BUT not to digress. It may be said upon the whole, that the maxims of his late majesty's government were wise, noble and truly heroic. And as his views were in general pure, generous and sublime; so it pleased God to give him a prosperous reign. During his reign, there have indeed been some domestic troubles, as well

well as foreign wars; to prevent which, is not always in the power of the wiſeſt and beſt kings. Nor can it be denied without blindneſs, or extreme prejudice, that ſome great and threatning evils, have been growing in the nation ever ſince the revolution. Of which, however, thoſe only ought to bear the blame, who were the criminal cauſes of them. And even notwithſtanding theſe evils, it may be truly ſaid, that all theſe reigns have been happy, attended with national proſperity and glory; particularly that of his late majeſty. He ever exerted himſelf wiſely and vigorouſly, and, by the bleſſing of God, ſucceſsfully, to promote the public good. The rebellion had a ſeaſonable ſtop put to it; and the prudent meaſures ſince uſed, have in ſome meaſure allayed old animoſities, and united parties. There has not, perhaps, been greater harmony in the nation ſince the days of queen Elizabeth, if then, than during ſome of the laſt years of his majeſty's reign. During which time, his majeſty's counſels and arms have alſo been remarkably proſpered, not only for the defence of his own dominions, but alſo for reducing the pride and power of France. Neither of the four quarters of the world is deſtitute of glorious proofs hereof. Nor is it eaſy to mention any period, wherein the national honor and proſperity were greater, than at the time of his majeſty's deceaſe: Even tho' he left his ſubjects engaged in a war, which we could have wiſhed him to terminate with a glory and ſucceſs, equal to that with which it had been carried on for ſome years before. This would have compleated both his and our worldly felicity; and might have rendered the reign of king George II. the moſt glorious period in the Britiſh annals: Yea, it may, perhaps, ſtill be ſo, notwithſtanding this circumſtance is wanting to compleat the felicity of it.

GOD, indeed, bleſſed his majeſty with a long life and reign, tho' not ſo long as his good ſubjects deſired. He was, I ſuppoſe, the oldeſt reigning prince in Europe, at the time of his deceaſe: And, for many ages paſt, no king of England had attained to his years †. Had God regarded the fond wiſhes of his loyal ſubjects, he might indeed have been immortal: For the time would probably never have come, when they would have parted with him without any reluctance. But the moſt High, who ruleth in the kingdom of men, hath ſeen meet to call him out of this world. And altho' we cannot reſign ſo good a king, our common father, without a degree of ſorrow; yet we have doubtleſs far more reaſon to bleſs God for ſparing him to us ſo long, than we have to murmur or complain at his taking him away from us at laſt. And while we expreſs ſuch an ingenuous grief as becomes dutiful and obliged ſubjects on this occaſion, there are, as was intimated before, many circumſtances to conſole us under the loſs, and make us acquieſce in this diſpenſation of divine providence.

IT may truly be ſaid of his late majeſty, as it was of king David, that he "died in a good old age, full of days, riches and honor"*. He died as it were in the arms of victory; triumphing over his enemies, foreign and domeſtic; over the former by his arms, and over the latter by his goodneſs and clemency. He left the nation in as proſperous circumſtances, as could well be imagined in a time of war. He had not only lived longer, but done more good, and therefore acquired more glory, than moſt kings, even good ones, had done before him. Nor, which is a moſt material circumſtance, did he die till he ſaw his royal grandſon and heir, trained up under his own eye,

† He was almoſt 77. * 1 Chron. XXIX. 28.

eye, and that of a princeſs of very diſtinguiſh'd merit, arrived at ſuch a maturity of life and judgment, as qualified him for taking the government immediately into his own hands.

How much better has God been to us in this reſpect, than our fears ſometime ſince? not to ſay, than our deſerts. which it were unneceſſary to add. It is now almoſt ten years ſince God, in his holy providence, put us into tears and mourning, and awakened our ſerious apprehenſions, by the untimely death of his royal highneſs Frederic, prince of Wales, the then heir apparent, and father to his preſent majeſty. The late king was even then old and gray-headed, and was alſo ſaid at that time to be infirm. The next heir to the throne, he who, by the grace of God, now ſits upon it, was but about twelve years of age. So that we had great reaſon to fear, one of the woes would befal us, which Solomon ſpeaks of; that of having a child, or ſcarce more than a child, to reign over us. His late majeſty, in his great wiſdom and goodneſs, took all poſſible care and pains to guard againſt the inconveniences and hazards of this, if it ſhould pleaſe God to take him away during the minority, and tender age, of his royal grandſon. But, to our great joy, it has pleaſed the moſt High to lengthen out his important life, till he beheld the heir of his kingdoms and dominions of full age, and indeed more than full age, to govern them: And it is ſome time ſince our juſt apprehenſions above mentioned, were laid aſide. Thus graciouſly hath he, who ruleth in the kingdom of men, provided for our welfare. And as his preſent majeſty is the *firſt* king of Great-Britain, born therein, i. e. the firſt born in the iſland of Britain, ſince the kingdoms of England and Scotland were united, God grant he may prove a great and equal

bleſſing

bleſſing to both: And that the ſubjects of both, being now united in one kingdom as well as under one king, may have no ſuſpicions, no jealouſies, no contentions among themſelves, unleſs it is a contention, who ſhall ſhew at once the greateſt loyalty to his majeſty, and the ſincereſt love to Britiſh liberty, as founded in, as eſtabliſhed and ſecured by, the Britiſh laws: Which ought indeed to be more ſacred with Britons, than the intereſt of any particular perſon or family whatſoever. In ſaying which, I truſt, I ſay nothing unbecoming a good ſubject, in contradiſtinction to a ſlave.

ACCORDING to the lateſt advices from Britain, which came to town the laſt evening, it ſeems that a very ſpeedy peace is not now much expected, at leaſt, that it is not to be depended upon. We have indeed his majeſty's declaration to the court on the day of the late king's death, wherein, I think, this is implied: A declaration conceived in ſuch terms, as tend to raiſe our expectations of great felicity under his reign. You will doubtleſs hear with pleaſure part of a ſentence or two, extracted from it, as it has not been made public amongſt us—After ſpeaking of the great loſs which he and the nation had ſuſtained in the ſudden death of the king, his majeſty proceeds thus: "But animated by the tendereſt affections for "this MY NATIVE COUNTRY, and depending on the "advice, the experience and abilities of your lord-"ſhips, on the ſupport and aſſiſtance of every honeſt "man, I enter with chearfulneſs into this arduous "ſituation; and ſhall make it the buſineſs of my "life to promote in every thing the glory and in-"tereſt of theſe kingdoms"—A declaration truly worthy a young Britiſh monarch; which we ought to conſider, not as words of courſe, but as proceeding

ing from the royal heart of him that made it. * May that God, who hath the hearts of all kings, as well as of their ſubjects, in his hand, confirm his majeſty in theſe noble ſentiments, theſe truly royal purpoſes; and attach the hearts of all good men to his perſon, government and family. May he cloath his enemies with ſhame, while the crown flouriſhes on his head; and while three kingdoms with their dependencies, happy under his auſpicious reign, ſhall with one voice ſay, "Long live king George III; and die at leaſt "as old, as proſperous, as venerable, as much be-"loved, as much honoured, as George II!"—All this we ſincerely hope for; and more than this we could not, perhaps, very modeſtly deſire ——

THOUGH we ought always to remember our late ſovereign with the greateſt veneration, our allegiance muſt now be, or rather is already, transferred to his royal grandſon and heir; in whom, in ſome ſenſe, he ſtill ſurvives & reigns. Theſe Northern American colonies have indeed ever diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their loyalty, and their zeal for the proteſtant ſucceſſion in the houſe of Hanover. We had accordingly a great ſhare in the affections of his late majeſty; the happy fruits of whoſe royal care, and indefatigable endeavours for our ſecurity and welfare, we now reap in ſome

* Since this diſcourſe was delivered, we have had his majeſty's gracious, and moſt excellent ſpeech from the throne, to both houſes of parliament: In one paragraph of which, he is pleaſed to expreſs himſelf thus—— "Born and educated "in this country, I glory in the name of BRITON; and the "peculiar happineſs of my life will ever conſiſt in promot-"ing the welfare of a people, whoſe loyalty, and warm af-"fection to Me, I conſider as the greateſt and moſt perma-"nent ſecurity of My throne: And I doubt not but their "ſteadineſs in thoſe principles, will equal the firmneſs of "my invariable reſolution to adhere to, and ſtrengthen, "this excellent conſtitution"——

ome meaſure, and are likely to reap in ſtill greater abundance in future times. His royal highneſs, the late prince Frederic, had alſo a great concern for the proſperity of the colonies, as he well knew both their loyalty, and their importance to Great-Britain. And had he lived to aſcend the throne, we ſhould doubtleſs have had in him ſuch another friend and protector, as we have loſt in his late majeſty. We have no reaſon to doubt, but that his preſent majeſty will have the ſame gracious regard for us; and, perhaps, perfect that deliverance ſo happily begun, and carried on ſo far, for his American ſubjects, within theſe few years paſt. May God give us favour in his eyes, as he did in the eyes, both of his royal grandfather and father, that our great loſs in them may be made up in him! This we have reaſon humbly to hope, if we perſevere in our accuſtomed loyalty; and ſtill conduct ourſelves as dutiful ſubjects. And if our late, ever-honoured king, could now ſpeak to us. I am perſwaded he would admoniſh us to ſhew our regard to his memory, not ſo much by fruitleſly lamenting his death, as by a dutiful and loyal behaviour towards his ſucceſſor; as the certain way to ſecure his royal favour, and, by the bleſſing of heaven, to prolong, or even to increaſe, our tranquility and happineſs. I almoſt imagine I hear him ſpeaking to Us, in common with all our fellow-ſubjects, in ſuch terms as theſe — "Alas! my children, why do you thus in vain la-"ment my departure from you? Was not man born "to die? I was long happy in your affection, and "dutiful regard to me. You were alſo long happy "under my government, tho' leſs ſo than I ſincerely "deſired to make you. The relation of king and ſub-"ject no longer ſubſiſts between us. But death, "which has diſſolved that relation, has not been able "to diminiſh my love to you, and concern for your "happineſs,

" happineſs. I cannot indeed now promote it my-
" ſelf: But, behold THAT ROYAL YOUTH, whom you
" lately hail'd to the Britiſh throne!—Let all faction
" ceaſe; be loyal; be public-ſpirited. And in him,
" as you have another George, expect alſo another
" friend to your liberties; another guardian of your
" laws; another father; another victor over your ene-
" mies, with extended empire, and increaſing glory!"—

BUT let me now cloſe this diſcourſe with ſome very ſhort reflections of a practical nature——How tranſient is all worldly greatneſs and glory! Whoſe death is it, my brethren, that we have been meditating upon? Is it not that of a king? a great and proſperous king? one, whoſe fortune, whoſe riches and honor, might at once excite the envy of moſt other monarchs, and leave them in deſpair of ever attaining thereto. But, alas! what is worldly felicity, wordly glory? a ſudden gleam; a meteor darting along the ſky, which is no ſooner beheld, than it falls, and diſappears forever—
" Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."——

IF kings, if great and good kings, ſuch as the ſovereign of the world has dignified with the title of *gods*, muſt ſo ſoon " die like men," certainly we common mortals ſhould not either flatter ourſelves with the hope of immortality here, or place our ſupreme felicity in this world. Can any of us hope ever to arrive at ſuch worldly proſperity and greatneſs, as our late ſovereign enjoyed? Not, certainly, if we are in our right ſenſes. But would even that ſatisfy us? Not, unleſs we were more than mad.—Alas! it is only a low ambition, a ſordid ſpirit, that could take up contented with ſuch a portion, ſuch an happineſs, without looking beyond the grave: For " man being in honor, abideth not"—

WE are, moreover, admoniſhed by this diſpenſation of providence, to place our chief hope and confidence, not in man, not even in mighty kings, and potentates, but in the moſt high God, who ruleth in the kingdom of men, and hath the breath of all kings in his own hand —" Put not your truſt in princes, ſays the royal pſalmiſt, nor in the ſon of man in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth; he returneth to his earth: in that very day his thoughts periſh. Happy [then] is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whoſe hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth, the ſea, and all that therein is; which keepeth mercy forever."—The Lord ſhall live and reign forever: And the obedient ſubjects of his kingdom ſhall be ever ſecure, ever happy, in his favour and protection, tho' the kingdoms of this world are moved and overturned, or both earth heaven were diſſolved!

To conclude then: Let us all be admoniſhed to put our truſt in the great, the eternal God; and, in the way of well-doing, to commit the keeping of our bodies and ſouls to him, as unto a faithful creator. Let us both fear God, and honor the king; which duties the apoſtle joins together. Let us endeavour to lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godlineſs and honeſty; " as free, and not uſing our liberty for a cloke of maliciouſneſs, but as the ſervants of God;" and, by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for glory, honor and immortality. Let us be faithful and diligent in diſcharging the duties of our ſeveral ſtations in life; knowing that we are ſoon to paſs off the ſtage of this world, and to give an account of ourſelves to God the judge of all. And let me remind you, that in the judgment of the great day, it will be of far leſs importance, who has been a king, or mighty monarch, and who a perſon of low degree, than it will be, who has been

been a truly upright and good, and who a diſhoneſt and wicked man. For when the ſea, death and hell [hades] ſhall deliver up the dead that were in them, and the ſmall and great ſhall ſtand together before God, they ſhall be "judged every man according to "their works."

WHEREFORE now unto him, the king eternal, immortal, inviſible, who hath prepared his throne in the heavens, and whoſe kingdom ruleth over all; unto him be glory for ever and ever, AMEN.

Page 24, bottom, for 1684, read 1685.

THE END.